



## **NDI Quarterly Report: April 1 to June 30, 2005**

### **DRC: SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL PROCESS DEVELOPMENT DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD**

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#### **I. SUMMARY**

Despite continuing threats to peace and security, progress continues toward the development of the legal and political framework intended to bring the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) transition process to a successful conclusion. Gains during this quarter include the adoption by the National Assembly of a new Constitution that will be submitted to a national referendum in November 2005, the signing of a code of conduct by leaders of 187 political parties and the commencement on June 20 of the voter registration process. At the request of the country's Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), the National Assembly voted in mid-May to extend the transition period, originally scheduled to end on June 30, 2005. In anticipation of opposition to the extension, the government deployed police and military forces in Kinshasa and other urban centers to quickly suppress protests on June 30 that were led by several political parties, including the Union for Democracy and Social Progress (UDPS).

During this quarter, the National Democratic Institute (NDI) continued to conduct activities to improve prospects for a more inclusive and viable democratic transition. Program activities included:

- A retreat for the Political, Administrative and Judicial (PAJ) Committee of the National Assembly to analyze and propose amendments to the draft constitution;
- Technical assistance to the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) and political parties resulting in a political party code of conduct that was signed by 187 parties in an official signing ceremony;
- Operation of four Democracy Resource Centers in Kinshasa, Kikwit, Lubumbashi and Kisangani which provided training, access to information, and logistical and administrative resources to local representatives of political parties;
- A political party forum in Kindu, Maniema province, during which high level representatives from 10 political parties met with citizens to present and discuss their parties' positions on commercial policies;
- Screenings of videos from past political party forums for audiences at the Kinshasa, Kikwit and Lubumbashi resource centers;

- Working sessions with political party leaders to introduce and explain NDI's *Triangle of Best Practices of Effective Political Parties* at each of the four resource centers;
- Public information sessions on the DRC's Voter Registration Law for local political party representatives at the four resource centers;
- An Internet Training Session for local political party representatives in Kikwit;
- The signing of the *Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation* by leaders from 51 political parties;
- Trainings on youth and women's political participation in Kisangani, Kikwit, Kinshasa and Lubumbashi.

During the next quarter, NDI will continue to provide technical support to the PAJ Committee of the National Assembly, particularly with regard to the draft elections law. NDI will also continue to implement a political party training program targeting youth and women, and will launch workshops for party activists on monitoring the voter registration process. In collaboration with local and international partners, NDI will continue to publicize and promote implementation of the Political Party Code of Conduct and the Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Participation, and will bring together women leaders from across the country to discuss strategies and mechanisms to increase the number of women elected to public office. NDI will also assess the possibility of holding another in its series of political party forums in Goma.

## II. POLITICAL UPDATE

On May 13, the National Assembly adopted a new constitution that will be submitted to a national referendum in November 2005. In the weeks preceding its adoption, the *Comité International d'Accompagnement à la Transition* (CIAT), composed of Kinshasa-based diplomats from the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, as well as representatives from the governments of Belgium, Canada, South Africa, the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU), applied considerable political pressure on the National Assembly to conclude debate and pass a constitution that complies with international standards.

On June 18, leaders of 187 political parties signed a code of conduct pledging their candidates, representatives and members to respect the democratic process. On June 20, the voter registration process began in Kinshasa.

A number of parties, particularly those that are not part of the transitional administration, such as Etienne Tshishekedi's UDPS, have been increasingly vocal in denouncing delays in the transition process. Under the terms of the DRC's peace agreement, elections were scheduled to be held by June 30, 2005, but with limited progress on electoral preparations, this deadline became increasingly unrealistic. In April, CEI President Apollinaire Malu Malu made an official request to the National Assembly that elections be rescheduled in accordance with Article 195 of the Transitional Constitution, which states that the transition period may be extended for two consecutive six-month periods until June 2006. In late June, the National Assembly voted in favor of extending the transition process.

The UDPS, one of the DRC's largest political parties, rejected the extension. UDPS leader Tshishekedi, along with leaders from other parties not represented in the current transitional government, called for a reorganization of the transitional government and renegotiation of the terms of the peace agreement. Tshishekedi asserted that the UDPS would not be bound by the terms of the peace agreement beyond June 30 and called on UDPS members to boycott the voter registration process. On June 30, a large deployment of police and military forces prevented demonstrators in Kinshasa from reaching the center of the city to protest the extension of the transition period. According to human rights organizations, the police used unnecessary force to quell the protests. Seven protesters were killed and hundreds were arrested.

Earlier in the quarter, security forces arrested 35 people in Katanga province, including Andre Tshombe, the son of Katangan secessionist leader Moise Tshombe and current president of Confederation Nationale Congolaise (CONACO), on suspicion of planning a coup to provoke the secession of this mineral rich province. Security forces found a hidden cache of small arms, heavy weapons and munitions, and made arrests in the towns of Likasi and Lubumbashi.

### **III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

NDI's program in the DRC aims to enhance prospects for an inclusive and viable democratic transition by aiding the development and strengthening of basic political and legislative processes and democratic institutions. In this regard, the program seeks to:

- Facilitate the implementation of a legal framework for a democratic transition to representative and accountable government;
- Broaden citizen interest and enhance public participation during the transition period;
- Build a more representative and competitive multiparty system through political party capacity building;
- Strengthen the capacity of Congolese civil society organizations to observe and report on the electoral process.

In pursuit of these objectives, NDI works with a variety of partners that include Congolese political parties, civil society groups, the Transitional National Assembly, the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI), IFES, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC).

During the last quarter, NDI implemented the following activities in support of these objectives:

#### **A. Technical Support for the PAJ Committee**

**1. PAJ Committee Retreat to Analyze and Amend the Draft Constitution.** From April 18 to 23, the National Assembly's Political, Administrative and Judicial (PAJ) Committee held a retreat to analyze the draft constitution that had been recently presented by the Senate. At the request of PAJ Committee President Mwando Simba, NDI assisted in planning and organizing the event. The retreat was designed to provide space for open discussion of possible amendments to present to a plenary session of the National Assembly. Approximately 200

participants attended the retreat, including the 70 legislators on the PAJ committee and numerous committee staff. After long periods of debate, the PAJ committee presented a revised version of the constitution to National Assembly President Olivier Kamitatu.

**2. Ongoing Technical Support to the PAJ Committee.** In partnership with national jurists and representatives from USAID, IFES, the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), the Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF), the EU and MONUC, NDI provided technical assistance to the National Assembly in the drafting of a new electoral law in accordance with accepted international standards. In addition, NDI's Legislative Senior Program Manager, Mory Fanny, held approximately 120 individual consultations with PAJ committee members on specific pieces of pending legislation. NDI also provided technical expertise at a number of events pertaining to the transition process, including meetings of the *International Partners Technical Committee on the Electoral Process* and the group of *International Partners Engaged in the Technical Support of the Parliament*.

## **B. Technical Support to Political Parties and the Independent Electoral Commission (CEI) on the Adoption of a Code of Conduct**

During this quarter, NDI consulted regularly with CEI representatives in Kinshasa to discuss the adoption of a code of conduct between the political parties. These consultations focused mainly on developing a means to amend the code that had already been drafted, but not signed, by party leaders in consultation with the CEI. Representatives from NDI discussed the code's strengths and weaknesses with the CEI and other international partners, including KAF and EISA. To improve coordination of work to support the CEI and other aspects of the electoral process, NDI, KAF and EISA developed a Memorandum of Cooperation. It is expected that the memorandum will be signed in the next quarter.

On June 18, leaders of 187 political parties signed the revised code of conduct. The code describes the rights of all political parties (including opposition parties) and pledges candidates, representatives and members of all political parties (including elected officials) to respect a number of norms regarding the democratic process such as:

- Non-violence, respect for human dignity, property, and the physical integrity of the human person;
- Acceptance of election results;
- Respect for the rule of law;
- Prohibition against the use of security forces in the interest of political parties;
- The protection of journalists;
- Avoidance of hate speech; and
- Non-discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, class or religion.

## **C. Political Party Forums**

NDI's political party forums bring together representatives from 10 political parties in each of the country's 11 provinces to discuss an issue of local importance with citizens at the grassroots level. Each forum addresses a different topic of concern to the community where the

event is held, and is preceded by an assessment mission and a workshop on communication and message development for local political party representatives.

**1. Preparatory Assessment Mission for Kindu Forum.** From March 28 to 31, NDI conducted a preparatory mission in Kindu, Maniema Province, to lay the groundwork for the tenth in a series of 11 forums held throughout the country. NDI's assessment team met with regional political party leaders and key representatives from government and civil society organizations to secure their support for the forum. The team also met with regional representatives from a women's organization. From the consultations and meetings held during the assessment mission, NDI selected the following 10 political parties to participate in the Kindu forum: PPRD, RCD, MLC, Forces du Futur, FONUS, RCD-KML, UDPS, PDSC, PANU, DC. Each of these parties maintains a local presence and has held political and/or constituency outreach activities in the region.

**2. Workshop on Communication and Message Development.** On April 9, NDI conducted a working session on message development and delivery for leaders selected by their political parties to speak at the Kindu forum. Nine party representatives, including two women, attended the event. NDI Country Director Parfait Moukoko led the training with a comprehensive overview of the main theories and objectives of political communication, issue-based message research and effective delivery strategies. Following the presentation, participants engaged in a constructive discussion on message development and received handouts from the training team.

**3. Kindu Political Party Forum.** The Kindu forum, which was held on April 19, provided an opportunity for national-level political party leaders to travel to the region to deliver and discuss party messages on regional commercial policy, the issue selected by community leaders. Maniema Province is one of the most isolated regions of the DRC, with the few remaining roads and limited infrastructure destroyed during the civil war. However, the soil is fertile and there are small mineral mines throughout the region that could provide a base upon which to promote sustainable commercial and economic development. The citizens of Maniema were particularly interested to learn how each of the parties, if elected to power, would promote legitimate commerce and sustainable economic development in the province. More than 240 representatives from civil society and political parties in the province participated in the forum and engaged party leaders in dialogue on the subject. Women were particularly well represented, as NDI encouraged each party and civil society organization to invite an equal number of women and men to participate in the forum.

**4. Screenings of Videos from Past Political Party Forums.** To further disseminate the information provided in past political party forums and to stimulate broader discussion on the topics discussed, NDI organized the screening of videos that documented the proceedings of the Kananga Forum on Employment Policies and the Kindu Forum on Commercial Policies at the Democracy Resource Centers in Kinshasa, Kikwit and Lubumbashi. Invitees to the video showings included representatives of political parties and civil society groups. Participating groups were encouraged to delegate male and female youth members to attend the event. The video of the Kindu forum was shown at the Democracy Resource Centers in Kinshasa (52 participants, including 5 women) and Lubumbashi (76 participants, including 16 women). The

video of the Kananga Forum was shown in Lubumbashi (86 participants, including 17 women) and Kikwit (74 participants, including 12 women). The large percentage of invitees who attended these events indicates a strong interest in the political party forum series.

#### **D. CEPPS Democracy Resource Centers**

NDI and CEPPS Partner IFES jointly manage democracy resource centers in Kinshasa, Kikwit, Lubumbashi and Kisangani to provide local representatives of political parties and civic organizations with access to information necessary for effective participation in the political process. Each resource center offers access to computers and the Internet, as well as a library with relevant publications and meeting space. In addition to their day-to-day function, the centers serve as a nexus for many of the activities undertaken by NDI throughout the country. The following political party support activities were undertaken at the centers during the quarter:

**1. Usage of Democracy Resource Centers.** On April 7, NDI and IFES opened the fourth CEPPS resource center in Kisangani to serve the Eastern Province of the country, as well as to support activities organized in North and South Kivu and Maniema. Eighty participants, including 45 party officials from 23 parties and 35 leaders of civil society organizations, attended the inauguration ceremony. The new resource center contains a small library with approximately 250 books as well as national and local newspapers, 10 computers with Internet connection and a conference room with a capacity to seat 80 persons.

From April 19 to 21, NDI organized a second Internet training in Kikwit for 12 participants from 6 parties. Participants voiced appreciation for training, and many requested that trainings be arranged for other party members who are not familiar with computers or Internet navigation.

	<b>Recorded Usage of Resource Centers:</b>		
<b>Resource Center</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<b>Kinshasa</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>669</b>
<b>Kikwit</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>310</b>
<b>Lubumbashi</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>396</b>
<b>Kisangani</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>324</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>1,570</b>	<b>2,084</b>	<b>1,699</b>

**2. Presentation of the Triangle of Best Practices of Effective Political Parties.** In April and May, NDI held working sessions with political party leaders in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Kikwit and Kisangani to introduce and explain NDI's "*Triangle of Best Practices of Effective Political Parties*." Workshop participants included women, youth and provincial leaders from each party: 104 representatives (4 women) from 79 political parties in Kinshasa; 46 representatives (1 woman) from 27 political parties in Lubumbashi; 97 representatives (24

women) from 15 parties in Kikwit; and 37 representatives (8 women) from 16 parties in Kisangani.

The Triangle is a graphic representation that illustrates the three fundamental characteristics of successful political parties: internal democracy, transparency and ongoing outreach to new sectors. These qualities transcend geographic boundaries and political ideology. Speakers explained how the Triangle of Best Practices can be used as a diagnostic tool to:

- ❖ Assist political parties in evaluating their internal organization practices; and
- ❖ Encourage broader dialogue among political party members, including women and youth, at the grassroots level.

After the Triangle was explained, participants divided into small multiparty working groups to analyze different sets of practices and identify the advantage or benefits of each practice. This exercise was designed to help participants understand why internal democracy, transparency and external outreach are important for parties and the political process. Participants also discussed how these factors can help a party become more competitive.

Over the course of the debates, party members highlighted the importance of vertical and horizontal communication and called on party leaders at the national level to become more engaged in local politics. Provincial leaders worked on equal footing with women and youth members and publicly recognized the importance of membership diversity and representation.

After the debates, NDI explained how parties could use the Triangle as a diagnostic tool to identify party strengths and weaknesses and to raise members' awareness of best practices. Participants agreed that the Triangle has the potential to serve as an important discussion tool. Many shared their intention to organize a membership meeting at the local level to open a broad dialogue that could help party members evaluate their organization's internal dynamics. At the end of the workshop, participants received poster-sized illustrations of the Triangle to put in their respective party offices, as well as copies of the Triangle and a one-page document explaining its use.

**3. Public Information Sessions on the Voter Registration Law.** In May, NDI organized a series of public information sessions at the Lubumbashi, Kikwit and Kisangani centers. Members of the CEI's provincial liaison offices explained the articles of the recently adopted Voter Registration Law to local representatives from political parties. The speakers also highlighted the role of political parties in monitoring the voter registration process. Questions were posed pertaining to eligibility requirements, the validation process, nationality issues and whether soldiers would be allowed to vote. Other questions pertained to the information technology (IT) equipment to be used in the registration process and whether local CEI officials would be allowed to register. In Kisangani, 102 participants attended the event, including 26 women. In Kikwit, 90 participants attended, including 15 women. In Lubumbashi, 66 participants attended, including 11 women. At the end of the event, IFES distributed copies of the law in French, Swahili (in Lubumbashi and Kisangani) and Kikongo (in Kikwit) to session participants.

## **E. Women and Youth Political Participation Program**

**1. *Signing of Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation.*** On May 13, leaders from 51 political parties signed the “Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation.” The declaration was developed during the NDI facilitated March 11 Conference on Women and Youth Political Participation facilitated by NDI, and was finalized by a follow-up committee comprised of women and youth who attended the conference representing political parties and civil society groups.

The declaration is intended to serve as a tool for women and youth to lobby party leaders for increased leadership opportunities in their parties. Thus far, the declaration has been used in the following ways:

*a. Press conference:* The signed declaration was publicized at a press conference on May 13. Five television channels reported on the declaration during their evening and morning news reports. The document also received coverage in newspapers and radio outlets. The press conference aimed to highlight party leaders’ commitments and to encourage them to implement the recommendations from the international conference.

*b. Partnership with other NGOs to publicize and use the declaration as a lobbying tool:* NDI provided the declaration to other international partners in an effort to encourage better collaboration on gender issues. The document was disseminated to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), MONUC’s Gender Office, Global Rights and EISA. From June 2 to 4, UNDP disseminated the declaration to more than 75 women civic and political leaders during a training session on lobbying techniques.

**2. *Trainings on Youth and Gender Participation.*** In May, NDI organized two gender trainings at the Kisangani and Kikwit centers. The trainings targeted political parties’ provincial presidents, as well as leaders of women and youth party wings. By inviting the provincial leaders, as well as women and youth activists, NDI sought to:

- Sensitize local party leadership on the importance of women and youth political participation;
- Encourage provincial leaders to be more accountable towards women and youth members; and,
- Provide participants with the tools necessary to lobby party leaders to develop strong practical measures that guarantee significant political participation by women and youth.

In Kikwit, a total of 64 party leaders, including 20 women, participated in the training. In Kisangani, 43 participants attended the training, including 13 youth and 16 women. This event provided the first opportunity ever for most of the participants to publicly discuss the role of women and youth in political parties.



The trainings began with a presentation on gender and the evolving role of women and men in society. Participants then divided into working groups to identify challenges to women and youth participation in political parties, and mechanisms to increase their roles in their respective parties. In the concluding debates, participants found consensus on the following points:

- Women and youth are not currently engaged in the political process.
- Certain parties are nepotistic in their selection of new leaders. This practice impedes women and youth from taking on leadership roles.
- The Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation represents an important tool for local party members to call for more participation within their parties by women and youth.

At the end of the training, NDI distributed copies of the declaration to participants, accompanied by suggestions on how to lobby their party leaders to implement its recommendations.

**3. *Training of trainers (TOT).*** On May 31, NDI launched a Training of Trainer program aimed at helping parties develop more representative and better informed membership bases by putting women and youth party members in a training and mobilization role. The program includes representatives from 29 political parties and a total of 120 leading trainers, half of whom are youth and half of whom are women. The program is administered through the four CEPPS resource centers. In each province, 15 political parties each identified a woman and a youth lead trainer to attend the initial TOT session, and to report back and disseminate information within their party. The first two trainings, which focused on training methodology, took place in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi in May and June, and will be repeated in July in Kikwit and Kisangani.

To broaden the program's reach, each trainer will designate a group of second level trainers (either youth or women party members) in the province where the NDI-led training is being held. The trainers will disseminate information received in the training to these second level trainers who will then be responsible for mobilizing other youths and women within their respective communities. Over time, NDI hopes that the program will reach 200 party members in each of the 29 participating parties.

Each participating party signed a Memorandum of Understanding with NDI to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the party and the Institute with regard to the work of the trainers. Each party designated a member of the party's executive committee to serve as training coordinator, who will be responsible for assisting the parties' trainers and strengthening communication channels between national and local leaders in the scope of the training program.

During the TOT in Kinshasa, national level training coordinators were invited to a working session with their party trainers. The working session directly engaged top party leaders with local trainers to further sensitize leaders about the trainings, to strengthen internal party relationships, and to create a training infrastructure in each party. During their discussions, some party trainers and their coordinators engaged in brainstorming sessions to identify creative ways of reaching the maximum number of party members at the local level.

#### **IV. RESULTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**Objective 1: Facilitate the implementation of the legal framework for a democratic transition to representative and accountable government.**

**Results:**

- With technical support from NDI, the National Assembly's Political, Administrative and Judicial Committee revised the draft constitution that had been prepared by the Senate. The National Assembly adopted a revised version of the constitution on May 13, 2005.
- The National Assembly adopted the concept of gender parity in the constitution, enshrined in Articles 12, 14, 15 and Article 5, paragraph 4. Legislators told NDI that the Institute's seminars for parliamentarians on gender issues played an important role in helping them to understand and appreciate the concept of gender ahead of parliamentary debates.
- In late June, 187 political parties signed a code of conduct with technical assistance from NDI.

**Objective 2: Broaden citizen interest and enhance public participation during the transition period.**

**Results:**

- During the Kindu political party forum, citizens from Maniema province learned about political parties' proposed plans to promote commercial and economic development in the region. Political parties had the opportunity to formulate proposals on this topic and to hear citizens' questions, opinions and concerns.
- Through screening of videos from the Kindu Forum on Commercial Policies (in Kinshasa, Kikwit and Lubumbashi) and the Kananga Forum on Employment Policies (in Kikwit and Lubumbashi), information was disseminated and discussion was provoked on these topics among citizens, local representatives of political parties and civil society groups.
- As a result of an Internet training at the Kikwit resource center, local political party representatives gained online research skills and learned how to access domestic and international sources of information about political developments in the DRC.
- The opening of NDI's newest resource center in Kisangani expanded access to informational and logistical resources for political parties in the DRC's Eastern Province and surrounding provinces.

**Objective 3: Building a more representative and competitive multiparty system through political party capacity building.**

## Results:

- As a result of public information sessions on the voter registration law held at NDI's Democracy Resource Centers in Lubumbashi, Kikwit and Kisangani, local representatives of political parties were able to access copies of the law and formulate questions for representatives of the Independent Electoral Commission regarding the legislation and the voter registration process. Copies of the voter registration law were widely distributed to increase community access to this document.
- Fifty-one political parties, including the largest groups inside and outside of the transition government, signed the "*Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation*." The importance of political participation by women and youth was highlighted in the press and to civic and political leaders.
- Through NDI's gender trainings at its resource centers in Kisangani and Kikwit, women gained a platform to identify obstacles to their full participation and to advocate for greater leadership roles within political parties. Women built solidarity and had the chance to recognize their common challenges in political leadership. Participants agreed to use the *Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation* as a lobbying tool to urge party leaders and local party offices not to hinder efforts to more effectively organize women within parties. After the trainings, women in Kisangani reached across political party lines to organize a gender training for local women from six political parties. The PPRC, MLC, DC and other parties publicized the declaration of engagement in their offices and held meetings for men and women to educate them on gender and the importance of women's political participation.
- Some political parties are using the declaration to educate citizens on gender and to mobilize women and youth in the political process. For example, in Kisangani, the PDSC organized a meeting for 11 women from the party, as well as 11 men and 9 women who are teachers and not party members, to discuss the declaration and the role of women and youth in the political process.
- In Kinshasa and Kisangani, women and youth trainers from 15 political parties were identified and given the opportunity to improve their skills in training methodology, in preparation for leading training sessions within their parties.
- As a result of the presentation of the *Triangle of Good Practices of Effective Political Parties*, local and national level political party leaders throughout the DRC were sensitized to the importance of expanding their membership base to include traditionally marginalized groups such as women and youth. The posters of the Triangle are now in each political party office, making it accessible to party members.

## V. EVALUATION

During the quarter, NDI's work with the Transitional National Assembly supported the process that led to passage of the constitution and progress toward passage of the electoral law. These laws are critical pieces of the legal framework necessary to ensure a democratic transition to representative and accountable government. NDI's efforts to sensitize legislators on gender issues contributed to the inclusion of strong language in the constitution protecting the rights of women (see Articles 12, 14, 15 and Article 5, paragraph 4).

The Political Party Code of Conduct has the potential to be a valuable tool to hold political parties and their representatives in government accountable to democratic principals. NDI plans to continue publicizing the document to ensure that the public is aware of the commitments made by the parties that signed the code.

The forum series continues to spark public interest in the political process and to lead citizens to feel more empowered about their ability to influence policymakers. Forums also encourage political candidates to formulate and articulate concrete proposals to address local needs as defined by constituents. Replaying of the videos from past forums at NDI's Democracy Resource Centers has proven to be an effective and low-cost way to stimulate dialogue on a variety of important policy topics throughout the country.

NDI's work with political parties during the quarter focused primarily on increasing inclusiveness within parties, particularly among traditionally marginalized sectors of society such as women and youth. The presentation on the *Triangle of Best Practices of Effective Political Parties* helped to sensitize party members to the need to recruit members from new sectors, and provided an analytical tool to assess the degree of inclusiveness within parties. The "*Declaration of Engagement to Promote Women and Youth Political Participation*" serves as a written commitment by party leaders to increase inclusiveness, and provided a substantive tool to hold party leaders accountable to implement the recommendations of the March 11 Conference of Women and Youth Political Participation. The trainings on youth and gender participation and the training of trainers program aimed to empower and encourage the participation of women and youth within political parties. Public information sessions on the Voter Registration Law empowered parties to maximize political participation among their members from all sectors of society.

NDI also worked to more effectively include traditionally marginalized regions of country in the political process by opening its fourth Democracy Resource Center in Kisangani. The center will increase access to training, information, and logistical and administrative resources among parties in the Eastern province and surrounding regions.

NDI's work to increase inclusiveness and the political participation of women has led to a number of new initiatives. As a result of the training on youth and gender participation, women in Kisangani reached across political party lines and organized a gender training for members of six different political parties. The training used the declaration of engagement as a tool to mobilize women. Women and provincial leaders from the PPRC, MLC, DC and other political parties publicized the declaration of engagement in their offices and held meetings for men and women to educate them on gender and the importance of women's political contribution.

Some political parties are using the declaration to educate citizens on gender and to mobilize women and youth in the political process. For example, in Kisangani, the PDSC organized a meeting for 11 women party members, as well as 11 male and 9 female teachers from outside the party, to discuss the declaration and the role of women and youth in the political process.

The politics surrounding the postponement of the June 30 deadline for the end of the transition period presented the program with both challenges and opportunities. A number of the positive political outcomes for which NDI provided technical support (such as passage of the constitution by the National Assembly, signature of the Political Party Code of Conduct and the commencement of the voter registration process) were expedited by policymakers' desire to show progress in advance of the June 30 deadline. On the other hand, as a result of security concerns prompted by the unwillingness of a number of parties to accept an extension of the transition period, NDI expatriate staff were prohibited from traveling outside of Kinshasa as the deadline approached and traveled temporarily to Brazzaville in the days surrounding June 30 as a security measure. Nonetheless, the Democracy Resource Centers remained open according to their normal schedule and local staff took on added responsibility to maintain programmatic activities during this period. From June 20 to 22, local resource center managers participated in a workshop on pedagogical techniques for the training of trainers. Trainings for youth and women political party trainers in Kikwit and Kisangani are scheduled to take place in early July and will be led by local staff. Overall, the events surrounding June 30 improved NDI's ability to implement activities in the DRC in the face of an uncertain political situation.

With a new timeline for elections, NDI plans to focus more attention on its fourth objective of strengthening the capacity of Congolese political parties and civil society organizations to observe and report on the electoral process. Because of its well-established links to political parties through the Democracy Resource Centers, NDI will begin this process by training political party activists to monitor the voter registration process.

## **VI. FUTURE ACTIVITIES**

During the next reporting period, NDI plans to conduct the following activities:

- Training of political party trainers on the internal organization of political parties at NDI's four Democracy Resource Centers;
- Trainings on voter registration monitoring for political party activists;
- Information sessions on the Political Party Code of Conduct;
- Screening of the video from the Kananga Political Party Forum;
- Preparatory mission to Goma to assess feasibility of holding a Forum;
- Seminar series on the electoral law for the Political, Administrative and Judicial Committee of the National Assembly;
- Roundtable for women political leaders on strategies and mechanisms to increase the number of women elected to office;
- Roundtable on the constitutional referendum and electoral laws for political parties.